

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated alkaline protease having an amino acid sequence wherein one or more amino acid residues selected from those located at (a) position 63, (b) position 89, (c) position 120, (d) positions 63 and 187, (e) position 226, (f) position 296, (g) position 304 of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, ~~or at positions corresponding to these positions~~ are the following amino acid residues, respectively: ~~Position (a):~~ (a) serine, ~~Position (b):~~ (b) histidine, ~~Position (c):~~ (c) arginine ~~Position (d):~~, (d) serine, ~~Position (e):~~ (e) tyrosine, ~~Position (f):~~ (f) valine, and ~~Position (g):~~ (g) serine, wherein said alkaline protease has alkaline protease activity.

2. (Currently Amended) An isolated alkaline protease having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or an amino acid sequence having ~~80% or higher~~ at least 98.1% homology with the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein one or more amino acid residues selected from those located at (a) position 63, (b) position 89, (c) position 120, (d) positions 63 and 187, (e) position 226, (f) position 296, (g) position 304 of the amino acid sequence of SEQ No: 1, or at positions corresponding to these positions, are the following amino acid residues, respectively: ~~Position (a):~~ (a) serine, ~~Position (b):~~ (b) histidine, ~~Position (c):~~ (c) arginine ~~Position (d):~~, (d) serine, ~~Position (e):~~ (e) tyrosine, ~~Position (f):~~ (f) valine, and ~~Position (g):~~ (g) serine, wherein said alkaline protease has alkaline protease activity.

3. (Withdrawn) A gene encoding the alkaline protease as described in claim 1 or 2.

4. (Withdrawn) A recombinant vector comprising the gene as described in claim 3.

5. (Withdrawn) A transformant containing the vector as described in claim 4.

6. (Withdrawn) The transformant according to claim 5, in which a host is a microorganism.

7. (Withdrawn) A detergent composition comprising the alkaline protease as recited in claim 1 or 2.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Claims 1 and 2 have been amended.

The amendment of Claims 1 and 2 is supported by the corresponding claims as originally filed and the original specification, including the Examples. Further support for the amendment of Claim 2 is implicitly provided by the eight defined amino acid substitutions recited in original Claim 2 that occur in a 434 amino acid protein ((434-8)/434 * 100 = % homology).

The specification has also been amended. These amendments find support in the corresponding sections of the originally filed.

No new matter has been added by the present amendments.